

Steven L. Beshear
Governor

Leonard K. Peters, Secretary
Energy and Environment
Cabinet



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Public Service Commission
211 Sower Blvd.
P.O. Box 615
Frankfort, Kentucky 40602-0615
Telephone: (502) 564-3940
Fax: (502) 564-3460
psc.ky.gov

David L. Armstrong
Chairman

James W. Gardner
Vice Chairman

NEWS RELEASE

Contact:
Andrew Melnykovich
502-564-3940, ext. 208
502-330-5981 (cell)
Rob Thormeyer (NARUC)
202-898-9382

PSC Vice Chairman Gardner to Lead National Task Force on Environmental Policies *Will represent state utility commissions' views to federal agencies*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Feb. 13, 2012) – Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC) Vice Chairman Jim Gardner has been named to lead a new task force of state public service commissioners that will serve as a liaison between state utility regulators and federal environmental rule makers.

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) has created the Task Force on Environmental Regulation and Generation in order to educate its members about the impacts of federal environmental rules on electric generation. The task force also will work with federal agencies, notably the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to address the implementation of federal environmental rules.

NARUC President David Wright has named 10 state commissioners to serve on the task force. They are drawn from existing NARUC committees on electricity, natural gas, water, consumer issues and energy and the environment and represent Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Ohio and Utah.

"I am honored to be appointed as chair of this task force," Gardner said. "State utility commissioners bring an important perspective to the discussion about these environmental rulemakings. I look forward to working with my colleagues and am thankful for this opportunity to serve."

The group will lead NARUC's efforts to educate its membership about Environmental Protection Agency rulemakings. The task force also will work with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to plan future meetings of the FERC-NARUC Forum on Reliability and the Environment.

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“This task force will be the key focal point for our members as we address the new environmental rulemakings,” NARUC President Wright said. “We must work together as a team to ensure that these rules do not inhibit reliability or overburden our consumers.

“We must get this right because the stakes are so high,” he said. “We’ve got a strong balance of geographic and political diversity on this panel, and I am grateful for Commissioner Gardner’s leadership. He is stepping up at a critical time.”

Gardner noted that Kentucky is already beginning to see the impact of the latest round of EPA regulations related to the use of coal as a fuel for electric generation.

“These regulations are changing the way Kentucky’s electric utilities produce power,” he said. “Their impact on ratepayers will extend far into the future.’

“The challenge for utility regulators is to find ways to manage and minimize those impacts,” Gardner said. “It is my goal to make this NARUC task force instrumental in helping us meet that challenge.”

NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889. Its members include the governmental agencies that regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. NARUC represents the interests of state public utility commissions before the three branches of the Federal government.

The PSC is an independent agency attached for administrative purposes to the Energy and Environment Cabinet. It regulates more than 1,500 gas, water, sewer, electric and telecommunication utilities operating in Kentucky and has approximately 90 employees.